

**FACULTY OF ARTS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH**

**ENGLISH 388.04-01**  
**COMICS AND GRAPHIC NOVELS**

**WINTER 2013**

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Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3:00 – 4:00

**Course description:** Topic in Popular Genres. No prerequisites. This course will introduce the scholarly study of comic books and graphic novels, with a particular focus on the formal elements that differentiate comics from other forms of literature (poetry, prose), and the history of the comic book format as it has evolved in the United States from the 1830s to today.

**Texts and readings:**

Jean-Paul Gabilliet, *Of Comics and Men: A Cultural History of American Comic Books* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2010)

Jeet Heer and Kent Worcester, *A Comics Studies Reader* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2008)

Ivan Brunetti, *An Anthology of Graphic Fiction, Cartoons and True Stories. Volume 2* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

Neil Gaiman et al. *Sandman v3: Dream Country* (New York: DC Comics, 2010)

Frank Miller and David Mazzuchelli. *Batman: Year One* (New York: DC Comics, 2007)

Bill Finger and Bob Kane. *Batman Chronicles Vol 1* (New York: DC Comics, 2005)

All of the above are required for this course, and are available in the bookstore.

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

**Midterm #1 (February 11, 2013).** The first mid-term examination will take place in class on February 11, 2013. This exam will cover all of the readings and lecture material from the first five weeks of the term. The exam will be a mixed format, incorporating short and long answers. Please note that material may be presented on slides may be presented as part of this exam. This exam is worth 15% of the final grade in this course.

**Midterm #2 (March 20, 2013).** The second mid-term examination will take place in class on March 20, 2013. This exam will cover all of the readings and lecture material from the first ten weeks of the term, but it will focus primarily on the material and readings from weeks six through ten. The exam will be a mixed format, incorporating short and long answers. Please note that material may be presented on slides may be presented as part of this exam. This exam is worth 15% of the final grade in this course.

**Registrar-scheduled final exam.** The final examination will be scheduled by the registrar. This exam will cover all of the readings and lecture material from the entirety of the course. The exam will be a mixed format, incorporating short and long answers. The exam will include at least one essay question. Please note that material may be presented on slides may be presented as part of this exam. This exam is worth 40% of the final grade in this course.

**Blog Postings** (throughout the term). Students are required to submit four blog posts to the course site during the term. These posts should be argumentative essays about the readings for the week, and can include links to material from outside the class. Posts should range in length from 300 to 500 words. You may not post multiple blogs about the same material, but may post about two different subjects in the same week. Blog posts will be graded after January 23, February 27, March 27, and April 15. You may submit your blog posts at any time during the term. It is recommended, though not required, that you submit one blog post in each of the four grading periods. Posts will be graded for originality, insight, and argumentation. Each blog post is worth 5% of the final grade, for a total of 20%.

**Blog comments** (throughout the term). Students are required to submit short follow-up commentaries on the blog postings offered by their fellow students. These may be brief (under 100 words is acceptable) but meaningful, and should help to steer the discussion in substantial ways. You will be credited for a comment only once per week, but you are welcome to contribute more than that if you wish. Blog comments are worth 10% of the final grade, and students should offer comments in at least ten of the weeks of class in order to receive full marks in this area.

There will be a registrar-scheduled final exam in this course. The exam period this term runs from April 19 to 30, and students must be available for examinations up to the last day of the examination period. There will be no extra-credit assignments in this course. Students must complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade on the course. Assignments submitted after the deadline has passed will be penalized with the loss of a third of a grade (on A- to a B+) for each business day that the assignment is overdue.

Please make every effort to take assignments directly to the instructor. If it is not possible to do so, take your assignment to SS 1152 and put it in the dropbox. Your assignment will be date-stamped and placed in the instructor's mailbox. It is your responsibility to keep a copy of all assignments in case of loss by any cause. Assignments cannot be returned by staff in the Department office.

### **Grading system:**

In this course, all essays, exams, and presentations will be marked on the University of Calgary's four-point Undergraduate Grading System, as described in the Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/f-2.html>

A+/A (4.0); A- (3.7); B+ (3.3); B (3.0); B- (2.7); C+ (2.3); C (2.0); C- (1.7); D+ (1.3); D (1.0); F (0)

All midterms will receive a numerical grade, to be converted using the following scale:

90 + %	A+	4.0
85 – 89 %	A	4.0
80 – 84 %	A–	3.7
77 – 79 %	B+	3.3

74 – 76 %	B	3.0
70 – 73 %	B–	2.7
67 – 69 %	C+	2.3
64 – 66 %	C	2.0
60 – 63 %	C–	1.7
55 – 59 %	D+	1.3
50 – 54 %	D	1.0
0 – 49 %	F	0

Please note that, according to the University Calendar (F.1), instructors may use their discretion when rounding upwards or downwards when the average of term work and exams is between two letter grades.

Although the A+ is solely an honorific that entails no additional points in the 4-point system, the course instructor will employ this mark to distinguish superlative work that exceeds expectations in style, correctness, intellectual depth and breadth, sophistication, and originality.

#### **Plagiarism:**

Using any source whatsoever without clearly documenting it is a serious academic offense. Consequences include failure on the assignment, failure in the course and possible suspension or expulsion from the university. Please refer to the following information and make sure you are familiar with the statement below on plagiarism.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-2-1.html>

#### **Scribe and Muse Club for English Students:**

The Scribe and Muse Reading and Writing Club (SMRWC) fosters and champions reading and writing through community service, leadership, and engagement. We strive to enhance the academic and social experience of undergraduate students by promoting academic excellence and interaction between students, faculty, and the community, through social, cultural, and academic events. <http://english.ucalgary.ca/content/scribe-and-muse-reading-and-writing-club>

Our email address is [smrwc@ucalgary.ca](mailto:smrwc@ucalgary.ca).

#### **English Department Website:**

For more information about courses, programs, policies, events and contacts in the Department of English, please go to our website at <http://english.ucalgary.ca>.

#### **Writing support:**

The Student Success Centre offers both online and workshop writing support for U of C students.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>

#### **Follow the Department of English on Facebook & Twitter:**



**Academic regulations and schedules:**

Consult the Calendar for course information, university and faculty regulations, dates, deadlines and schedules, student, faculty and university rights and responsibilities. The homepage for the University Calendar is

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/index.htm>

**Guidelines on e-mail Etiquette:**

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/it/help/articles/email/etiquette>

**Grade appeals:**

Consult the following University Calendar link and request advice from the English Department office, SS 1152. Please note that “mere dissatisfaction with a decision is not sufficient grounds for the appeal of a grade or other academic decision.”

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i.html>

**Deferral of term work and final examinations:**

Should you require an extension for completion of term papers or assignments beyond the deadline of five days after the end of lectures, an Application of Deferment of Term Work form must be completed. The University also has regulations governing the deferral of final examinations. See Calendar:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-6.html>,

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/g-7.html>.

**Academic accommodation:**

It is a student’s responsibility to request academic accommodation. If you are a student with a disability who may require academic accommodation and if you have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. Your academic accommodation letters should be provided to your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the commencement of this course. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. <http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/>

**Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>;

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip/>

**“Safewalk” Program:**

Campus Security will escort individuals day or night: call 220-5333 for assistance. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths.

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk/>

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

Have a question, but not sure where to start? The new Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (PIC) is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS110, call us at 403-220-3580 or email us at [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate> which has detailed information on common academic concerns.

For program planning and advice, contact the Student Success Centre (formerly the Undergraduate programs Office) at (403) 220-5881 or visit them in their new space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Library Block.

**Contact for Students Union Representatives for the Faculty of Arts:**

[arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Contact for Students Ombudsman's Office:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/provost/students/ombuds>

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is an extremely serious offence. Please read the following information carefully. The penalty routinely recommended by the English Department for documented plagiarism is failure of the course in which the offence occurred; academic probation is also routinely applied at the Faculty level. Suspension or expulsion can result from severe or repeated plagiarism.

The University Calendar states:

1. Plagiarism - Essentially plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:

- (a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),
- (b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
- (c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,
- (d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement, or when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. Citing your sources in a bibliography is not enough, because a bibliography does not establish which parts of a student's work are taken from other sources. MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose. Advice on adequate documentation can be found at the following web sites:

<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

## **DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STATEMENT ON PRINCIPLES OF CONDUCT**

According to the University Calendar, (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/j.html>) "The University of Calgary community has undertaken to be guided by the following statements of purpose and values: to promote free inquiry and debate, to act as a community of scholars, ..., to respect, appreciate, and encourage diversity, [and] to display care and concern for community". The Department of English, like the university as a whole, is committed to a "positive and productive learning and working environment." This environment is characterized by appreciation and encouragement of diversity and respect for the dignity of all persons: students, support staff, and faculty. The department will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour, such as threatening gestures, threatening or abusive verbal or written communication (including e-mails), or any conduct that "seriously disrupts the lawful education and related activities of students and/or university staff". Any cases of such misconduct should be reported immediately to the department Head, who, depending on the nature and severity of the incident, may then take further appropriate action.